



BUCKLAND ATHLETIC FOOTBALL CLUB

Action Plan to Minimise the Infection Risk to all personnel during the CoronaVirus [Covid-19] Pandemic

Version 1.5 dated September 2020

Buckland Athletic FC [BAFC, the club] recognises the potentially fatal risk of Covid-19 to football players, staff (paid or voluntary), spectators, and everyone with whom they come into contact. Therefore, all personnel are encouraged to comply with the latest guidelines issued by the UK Government, the Football Association, the Devon County FA, and all leagues the club are affiliated too at any level. The Club will play its part by circulating key relevant points of those guidelines, and by introducing protocols specific to its own operations and locations. This Action Plan, which may be updated from time to time, represents one strand of this: it will be disseminated by all appropriate means.

Covid-19 Officer

In line with FA instruction, the club Covid Officer is Co Chairman Nigel Holmes, effective July 2020. Nigel will be assisted by club Directors, Simon Dungey, Judd Barker and John Piller. We thank them for volunteering, and value the additional knowledge they bring. Duties will cover:

- To review external instructions and guidelines
- To advise the Club's Executive Committee on improvements and updates to this Action Plan and Risk Assessment
- To make sure all FA guidance is being followed by all club representatives and any visitors to Homers Heath

Timetable

July 2020 – Squad training begins. No more than 30 persons (including staff) may train together. 'Opposed' elements and drills may be included. Naturally, training continues through the season.

July 2020 – Homers Heath inspection with our Covid-19 Officer and Directors to list the work needing to be complete to become Covid-19 compliant, both inside the clubhouse, its facilities and outside around the ground

August & early September – Friendly matches may be played.

September – Ongoing, Current FA plans (subject to review) are to resume league and cup football at our level (Step 5) currently. The Western League has assured us that games will not be played in their competitions until paying spectators (even if limited) can be safely admitted, but no such guarantee yet exists for the FA Cup and FA Vase. Our teams below level 5 will start their seasons when their respective leagues dictate a starting date. Currently, our reserve side and ladies' team will play with

no spectators present, but our development squad and junior sides, will be permitted to have spectators, all of which must be suitably distanced.

Protocols applicable to All Training Sessions

Meetings will be conducted remotely wherever possible (although it is noted that certain forms will still need original signatures).

Football authorities have been consulted on the applicability of our standard insurance policies (personal accident and public liability) in the context of the pandemic. We use Devon County FA for these insurances and checks have been made.

Before attending a training session, all staff and players are expected to check themselves for any Covid-19 related symptoms (as advised by the UK Government). They are asked to be honest and to respect the duty of care they have to their teammates and staff.

Travel by all persons to venues should aim to minimise contact with other persons, utilising such measures as – avoiding public transport (and socially distancing where unavoidable); using one's own car (without sharing if possible), or better still walking or cycling; avoiding groups; keeping vehicles well ventilated; cleaning cars (especially door handles etc) between journeys; minimising stops at petrol garages, service stations etc; and paying for fares, goods, or services by contactless card wherever feasible. It is noted that in exceptional circumstances, where solo travel is not possible for players/staff, then the club will implement a 'buddy' travel scheme to ensure constituency in any unavoidable close quarter travel arrangements. These individuals will be reminded of the need to wear a mask, to use distanced seating arrangements and to keep chatter to a minimum, as well as adhering to the rest of the travel protocol stated above.

The National Health Service 'Test and Trace' initiative will be followed at training. Information will be kept in confidence by the club for 21 days after the session before being destroyed as per GDPR guidance. Players will be required to give name and contact number each time they visit the club.

A checklist of names given by the manager prior to each session, will be supervised at the ground entrance gates. Those not listed will be added to the checklist if appropriate if not they will be denied access to the ground.

The dressing rooms and showers will not be open for training sessions at Homers Heath, and the medical / physiotherapy room only opened in the event of an emergency.

Players will need to bag their change of clothing and shoes, and to change into and out of any club-supplied kit either in an open space or go home to do so. They may wish to bring a towel for their personal privacy. Such spaces will be suitably distanced. Wherever possible, especially for training, they should arrive already in training gear, and leave in it, or in a change of clothing that they have brought with them. NB: The club will not supply any clothing for training sessions.

Hand hygiene is imperative: wash with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds and use sanitising gels. Avoid touching the face, especially eyes, nose, throat, and ears.

The wearing of face coverings is mandated in many situations and recommended wherever feasible in all others if people feel it necessary to wear something. Attendees may also consider the use of other protective equipment, such as gloves.

Water-bottles and other personal items (such as shin pads, gloves, towels, etc) must not be shared. Thus each attendee must bring a drinks bottle, clearly marked with their name, for their own exclusive use. Drinks bottles can be refilled on site.

At Homers Heath, only the male/female and disabled pitch side toilets will be opened and in use. Only one person (male or female) will be allowed to enter at a time. The facility will include soap and hand sanitiser and will be thoroughly cleaned between each activity. Coaches will allow additional bathroom break time during sessions to recognise the reduced access to toilets.

Football, training cones, bibs and equipment, including any other portable equipment must be sanitised before and after each training session. Fixed equipment such as goal posts and corner flags will be sanitised before each session and during breaks. The moving of training equipment should be done so by the team manager or whomever is designated to do so.

During the session, gestures such as helping players off the ground should be avoided as well as any interactions/confrontation after any incidents. In between 'opposed' exercises, players and staff should revert back to keeping a safe distance amongst all participants.

Where sessions will involve 'opposed' exercises, players will use bibs, but keep said bib for the duration of the full training session. Bibs will not be shared and will be laundered after each training session.

Medical staff, such as sports therapists and first aiders, will be consulted with individually, to ensure that they have all necessary protective equipment and information to do their job effectively and safely. They will be provided with a copy of the documents listed in Appendix A.

Following the activity, all attendees are required to travel directly home, without unnecessary interaction or delay. Dressing rooms and showers will not be available at the Club. Players must not leave discarded belongings at the venue: all litter (especially used drinks containers) must be placed in bins or removed from the site.

In the event of anyone who attended subsequently contracting Covid-19, all attendees will be contacted, to undertake NHS 'Test and Trace' measures.

Whilst in attendance at all training sessions, players and staff are asked to remain vigilant and alert to all protocol as stated by the UK government and/or Buckland Athletic Football club.

Protocols applicable to Friendly Matches and subsequent League or Cup Matches

Football authorities have been consulted on the applicability of our standard insurance policies (personal accident and public liability) in the context of the pandemic.

During the period that spectators cannot be admitted, it has been decided not to formally announce pre-season fixtures in advance, to discourage spectators from trying to seek entry. The Club resolves to provide full post-match reports to keep fans engaged and updated.

Before attending a match, all staff and players are expected to check themselves for any Covid-19 related symptoms (as advised by the UK Government). They are asked to be honest and to respect the duty of care they have to their teammates and staff.

Travel by all persons to venues should aim to minimise contact with other persons, utilising such measures as – avoiding public transport (and socially distancing where unavoidable); using one's own car (without sharing if possible), or better still walking or cycling; avoiding groups; keeping vehicles well ventilated; cleaning cars (especially door handles etc) between journeys; minimising stops at petrol garages, service stations etc; and paying for fares, goods, or services by contactless card wherever feasible. It is noted that in exceptional circumstances, where solo travel is not possible for players/staff, then the club will implement a 'buddy' travel scheme to ensure constituency in any unavoidable close quarter travel arrangements. These individuals will be reminded of the need to wear a mask, to use distanced seating arrangements and to keep chatter to a minimum, as well as adhering to the rest of the travel protocol stated above.

The National Health Service 'Test and Trace' initiative will be followed at all matches. Information will be kept in confidence by the club for 21 days after the game before being destroyed as per GDPR guidance. Players will be required to give name and contact number each time they visit the club.

For Buckland Athletic players/staff, a checklist of names given by the manager prior to each match, will be supervised at the ground entrance. A list of travelling teams and officials will be sought in advance of their visit.

Where possible, away teams and officials will be asked for an estimated arrival time to the ground to allow for plans to be implemented to avoid congestion upon arrival. Those entering the ground should only do so in adequate time to complete their own roles/duties.

Seating has been cordoned off in the grandstand to accommodate the non-playing coaches and substitutes. The usual laws relating to the technical area are relaxed appropriately. We state only 3 people should use the dugouts during games.

Match officials will be advised to distance when using their changing room and shower. They may need to do this by using it individually.

The dressing rooms and showers will be open for first team home games. Players, coaches, and support staff are asked to use these facilities for the least amount of time possible, to suitably distance where possible, to minimise the number in the changing room at one time. Advice suggests no more than 11 players and 1 coach or manager. It may be necessary to wear appropriate face coverings whilst using the changing rooms.

Hand hygiene is imperative: wash with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds and use sanitising gels. Avoid touching the face, especially eyes, nose, throat, and ears.

Water-bottles and other personal items (such as shin pads, gloves, towels, etc) must not be shared. Thus each attendee must bring a drinks bottle, clearly marked with their name, for their own exclusive use. Drinks bottles can be refilled on site.

At Homers Heath on a match day all toilets, both inside the clubhouse and outside will be opened and in use. Only one person (male or female) will be allowed to enter at a time. Please follow the one-way system in operation in any inside area of the clubhouse and its facilities. This is denoted by signage and arrows. The facility will include soap and hand sanitiser and will be thoroughly cleaned between each activity.

The two squads and the match officials will each be advised of separate areas for their pre-match warmups:

Team sheets will be exchanged only electronically – the opposing secretaries, match officials, and PA announcer will take smartphone photographs of them.

Football, training cones and equipment must be sanitised before and after each match. For fixed equipment, goalposts, and corner flags, these will be sanitised before each match and at half time. BAFC Directors, Committee members and club volunteers will attend all home matches to clean the goalposts and corner flags and a supply of spare sanitised footballs will be placed close by to the dugouts. Retrieved footballs will be sanitised before being returned to the technical area ready to be reused.

While the underlying principle of the respect handshake will be encouraged, the physical handshake itself will not take place until further notice.

Players and staff will be reminded by appropriate signs not to engage in unnecessary physical contact before, during, or after the match, such as goal celebrations, disputes, and handshakes.

Where possible, match officials' fees will be paid without the use of cash, *ie* by direct bank transfer. If that is not possible, sealed pouches of cleaned notes and coins will be used.

Medical staff, such as sports therapists and first aiders, will be consulted with individually, to ensure that they have all necessary protective equipment and information to do their job effectively and safely. They will be provided with a copy of the documents listed in Appendix A.

Players must not leave discarded belongings at the venue: all litter (especially used drinks containers) must be placed in bins or removed from the site.

Whilst in attendance at all matches, players and staff are asked to remain vigilant and alert to all protocol as stated by the UK government and/or Buckland Athletic Football club.

When confirming fixtures, visiting clubs and match officials will be advised of this Action Plan, and given the opportunity to raise any questions they may have.

When playing away from home, Buckland Athletic FC will create a list of names to include those players, coaches and staff who will travel for Test and Trace purposes and this will be forwarded to the home

sides club secretary. We will also ask to see that clubs risk assessment and action plan so we can become familiar with the procedures we will need to adhere to once we arrive at the club/ground.

When Spectators are permitted to return to the ground

When guidance from the FA advises it is safe for spectators to return to Homers Heath, those supporters from both sides will be expected to engage and follow all protocols BAFC have in place to keep them and others safe. **Also see clubhouse guidance below.**

Entrance to the ground is via the main gates and in turn, only via the turnstiles. A contactless payment system can be used at the turnstile as well as cash.

Test and Trace will be in operation and spectators will be asked to give their name and contact number at the turnstile. This information will be stored confidentially for 21 days and destroyed thereafter as per GDPR regulations.

Once inside the ground, the clubhouse can be accessed via the front door, signage from the patio area and fencing will guide you to that entrance. Exit from the clubhouse is via the single door leading back onto the patio area. A one-way system inside the clubhouse makes using these doors easy. From here, spectators can make their way to their preferred viewing position, pitch side.

BAFC stewards will be visible around the ground and its facilities to manage the match day experience.

We have marked out safe distancing markers around the full perimeter of the pitch to designate where people should stand. Larger groups of 6 or more will be advised to distance where possible.

Available seating in the grandstand has also been marked out so it is obvious which seats can be used. Entrance to the grandstand will be via the top pitch entrance.

The pathway behind both dugout/technical areas has been cordoned off to stop spectators from passing by them. Directional arrows have been sprayed onto the ground to indicate the safe way to walk. The pathways around Homers Heath are wide enough to walk both ways, but we do advise people to walk on each edge of the path to remain distanced. People are advised they should walk continuously to their destination rather than "stop/start" which might cause confusion to others who may be passing by.

Sanitiser has been placed around the ground for the use of everyone. We advise regular visitors to the club to familiarise themselves with the new Covid-19 layout. It will be in place for some time to come.

On a match day all toilets, both inside the clubhouse and outside will be opened and in use. Only one person (male or female) will be allowed to enter at a time.

Please follow the one-way system in operation in any inside area of the clubhouse and its facilities. This is denoted by signage and arrows. The facility will include soap, hand sanitiser and paper towels and will be thoroughly cleaned between each activity.

Clubhouse/Kitchen guidance for all users

NHS Test and Trace is in operation within the clubhouse and around the ground via the new NHS App. You can now scan the NHS QR code which will register your attendance at Homers Heath.

If you aren't able to use the NHS app, we will still collect your details at the turnstile, you will be asked again to provide these details to support NHS test and trace. This information will be stored confidentially for 21 days and destroyed thereafter as per GDPR regulations.

There is a clearly defined one-way system in operation within the clubhouse. All users are expected to follow this system. Entry to the clubhouse is by the front door and exit is via the single door taking you out onto the outside patio area.

Hand sanitiser is placed at several locations around the clubhouse and posters will help to define. People should use sanitiser at frequent intervals during their visit. Hand washing facilities are within the clubhouse toilets where soap and hand towels will be found.

Toilets are limited for use and some of these facilities have been made unavailable to abide by social distancing guidance.

Bar and Kitchen staff all have the use of an unlimited stock of PPE which includes face masks and disposable gloves.

Bar till can take contactless payments as well as cash. The till itself is sanitised regularly to minimise cross contamination.

A clearly defined queuing system at the bar has been implemented and when in front of the bar, 3 boxes have been created on the floor for users to stand in to get served. We ask that the queue remain distanced when around the bar area.

Queuing to use the kitchen facilities will be strictly from the outside serving hatch. The queue should maintain a suitable distance.

The kitchen and its staff have always had to follow strict environmental hygiene guidance, and this has been reviewed to make sure Covid-19 guidance has also been included into the operation. Hygiene certificates are on display.

Seating within the clubhouse is limited and users will be asked to sit in their own "bubbles" discouraging anyone outside of this to move well clear of them. Clubhouse capacity has been deemed **75 persons maximum** at any one time and stewards will oversee that these numbers are not breached. The outside patio area is also available with seating, again in support bubbles or at distance.

All surfaces are sanitised after use and cleaning regimes are implemented after each match/function/meeting, with a weekly disinfection deep clean being carried out through the toilet facilities to support the daily cleaning routines.

Pool table, cues and balls are all wiped down clean after each game.

Finally, all glassware is washed using high temperature automatic washers.

As of Thursday 24th September 2020, the following changes have been implemented at Homers Heath, the home of Buckland Athletic FC.

- Face coverings **MUST** be worn on entrance to the clubhouse. These may be removed when seated, eating or drinking. They must then be re-applied when using the toilets or leaving the clubhouse.
- Please follow the **one-way system** in place, following the directional arrows
- **Table Service Only** in the clubhouse, instructions on how to order are simple to follow and will be on display at every available table.
- Please follow the “**rule of 6**” at all times
- Before arrival on matchday, please ensure you have downloaded the **NHS test and trace app** (NHS Covid-19) to your phone, as you will be asked to check in **via the official NHS QR code** upon entry. If you are unable to do so, please do provide track and trace details on a piece of paper.
- For midweek games, last orders will be called at **9.30pm** and the clubhouse will **CLOSE** at 10pm prompt.

We ask that you be patient with our staff and volunteers as they also adapt to these changes, so please respect the new rules to ensure that everyone has a safe and enjoyable experience at Homers Heath.

A copy of the club Covid-19 risk assessment is also on display on the notice board and both the assessment and this action plan are published on the club’s website.

Dissemination and Disclaimer

This Action Plan and club Risk Assessment is to be posted in full on the Buckland Athletic FC website, with a copy kept on site within the clubhouse. The Devon FA and Leagues our teams are affiliated too will be advised of this.

This Action Plan has been prepared with the aim of promoting best practice for anyone involved with Buckland Athletic FC. It does not constitute, replace, or override any legal advice, law, or directive of the Government or Public Health England. Advice from independent medical practitioners should always be followed and sought wherever felt necessary. We aim to make this Action Plan as accurate as possible at the time of publication, but readers are reminded to check the Government website to obtain the most up-to-date information on all pandemic related issues. Sport is a non-essential activity, and anyone participating in any capacity acknowledges that it has inherent risks, which are heightened during the pandemic, and which they accept at their own choosing.

Appendix A – Documents Consulted in the preparation of this Action Plan

National League System Club Guidance COVID-19 Return to Football v1.0

The FA issues guidelines for the return of outdoor competitive grassroots football.

